

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 21, 2018

H.E. Ambassador Mull Ssebujja Katende
Mission of the Republic of Uganda to the United States
5911 16th Street NW
Washington, DC 20011

Re: Arrest and Torture of Robert Kyagulanyi

Your Excellency:

We write to call on the government of Uganda to drop all charges filed against Member of Parliament Robert Kyagulanyi, more commonly known as Bobi Wine, five of his colleagues, and hundreds of individual citizens around the country who have recently been detained and beaten under false pretenses.

Unfortunately, on the day of the special election in Arua Municipality, President Museveni's convoy was pelted with stones. Kyagulanyi and five of his colleagues, Kassiano Wadri, Gerald Karuhanga, Paul Mwiru, Michael Mabikke and Francis Zaake, were charged with treason and possession of illegal firearms under suspicion for initiating the stone throwing. Around 30 others from Arua were also arrested. During his time in custody, Kyagulanyi was severely beaten.¹

Since Kyagulanyi's arrest, demonstrations calling for Kyagulanyi's release have erupted around the country. State police and security forces have fired tear gas and used live ammunition on protestors.² Videos have surfaced of the Ugandan army beating journalists that covered the demonstrations.³ The Ugandan government has stated that "over 100 suspects have been arrested and investigations are ongoing."⁴

Uganda has long been a key U.S. ally, particularly in our efforts to bolster regional security. We have also worked hand in hand to promote the rule of law and the protection

¹ "Pop Star Bobi Wine Poses Biggest Threat to Ugandan Strongman," Bloomberg, August 27, 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-08-27/pop-star-bobi-wine-poses-biggest-threat-yet-to-ugandan-strongman>

² "One dead and dozen arrested as Uganda police battle protesters over detained pop star MP," the Telegraph, August 21, 2018, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/08/21/one-dead-dozens-arrested-uganda-police-battle-protesters-detained/>

³ "Bobi Wine protests: Uganda army sorry over beating journalists," BBC, August 21, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-45257309>

⁴ Ambassador Katende, Mull S. "C/POL/W7." Received by Congressman Brad Sherman, Embassy of Uganda, 27 Aug. 2018, Washington, DC

of human rights, as well as to support civil society in advancing the health and economic well-being of the country, and we want to be able to continue to do so in good conscience. Suppressing political dissent is a dangerous trend – one that must be reversed if Uganda wants to truly embrace democratic ideals.

We urge the government of Uganda to immediately drop all charges filed against Kyagulanyi and his colleagues. We also call for a thorough investigation into all allegations of violence against Kyagulanyi, his colleagues, demonstrators and journalists. Finally, we urge the government to halt efforts to silence the political opposition.

Sincerely,



Brad Sherman
Member of Congress



Karen Bass
Member of Congress